

E.R.

Mufaxed to Chequers
27/10
Korea.

Seen by PM
1915 GR: PM 'O.K.'
1720 Informed Res. Clerk.

PRIME MINISTER

PRESIDENT PARK OF SOUTH KOREA

We have now received, from the Foreign Office, the suggested draft message of condolence for you to send. This is attached (Flag A).

I have also appended the background information we have to date.

At Flag B is Seoul telegram 255, which contains the initial account of the incident and also briefly analyses the resultant internal situation.

At Flag C is Seoul telegram 257, which contains the recommendation that an official message of condolence should be sent from you.

And finally, at Flag D, is Seoul telegram 259 which is our latest information on the killing. It expands upon the earlier situation report and outlines the thinking of the Americans. Incidentally, it also records (paragraph 5) that President Carter has already sent his condolences.

If you agree that draft, or amend it, as soon as the Garden Room Girl so informs me I will instruct the Foreign Office accordingly.

Roger Carter
Duty Clerk

27 October 1979

RESTRICTED



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

27 October 1979

Private Secretary
10 Downing Street

Dear Private Secretary,

DEATH OF PRESIDENT PARK OF SOUTH KOREA

You will already have seen Seoul telegrams Nos 254, 255, 257 and 259, reporting President Park's death and recommending that a message of condolence be sent by the Prime Minister to the Prime Minister and Acting President, Choi Kyu Hah.

The circumstances of the President's death remain somewhat obscure, and in particular the role played in it by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency. But we enjoy good relations with the Government of the Republic of Korea and the transfer of power appears to have been carried out in accordance with the Korean Constitution. Mr Blaker, in the absence of Lord Carrington in Oslo, therefore considers it would be appropriate to send a formal message of sympathy, as in the enclosed draft telegram. The Resident Clerk will arrange to despatch this if the Prime Minister agrees.

Yours ever,

Richard Samuel

R C Samuel
Far Eastern Department

RESTRICTED

File No.....

Department FED

Drafted by R C SAMUEL
(Block Capitals).....

Tel. Extn.....

OUTWARD

TELEGRAM

Security Classification RESTRICTED
Precedence IMMEDIATE
DESKBYZ

FOR COMMS. DEPT. USE	Despatched	(Date)	POSTBY
		(Time)ZZ

PREAMBLE

(Time of Origin) Z (G.M.T.) (Restrictive Prefix).....
 (Security Class.) RESTRICTED (Caveat/ Privacy marking)
 (Codeword) (Deskby)..... Z

TO IMMEDIATE SEOUL Tel. No.of
 (precedence) (post)

AND TO (precedence/post) IMMEDIATE OSLO

AND SAVING TO

REPEATED TO (for info) WASHINGTON, TOKYO, PEKING

SAVING TO (for info)

Distribution:-

- Departmental:
- FED
- PCD
- News Dept
- NAD, PUSD,
- PS, PS/LPS,
- PS/Mr Blaker
- PS/PUS
- Mr Cortazzi,
- Mr Murray
- Mr Moberley
- Ld N Gordon Lennox
- RC

Copies to:-

10 Downing Street
Cabinet Office
(D10)

[TEXT]

F128/79T

Your tel Nos 254-259 (now repeated to Oslo):
President Park's death.

1. Thank you for these helpful telegrams.
2. Though the exact circumstances of President Park's death, and especially the role of the KCIA remain obscure, we agree that a formal message of condolence would be appropriate. Please therefore arrange to deliver a message from the Prime Minister as follows:

"I was shocked to hear of the sudden death of His Excellency President Park Chung-Hee. I should like to extend through you to the Government and people of the Republic of Korea Her Majesty's Government's condolences and our sympathy to the late President's family."

PRIME MINISTER

For [unclear]

President Park of South Korea

You probably heard on the radio news last night or this morning that President Park of South Korea was killed late last night. It seems that the President was shot by the Director of the KCIA (Kim Choe Kyu) during a quarrel over dinner. Apparently the President's personal bodyguard (Cha Ji Kyu) and the Director were having a heated quarrel and the Director drew a gun and fired at Cha. The President appears to have been killed accidentally in the shooting that followed.

- 5 deaths

The question of an official message of condolence is being urgently considered by the FCO this morning. I will telex down to you a draft message for your approval as soon as one becomes available.

*(Signed R. Carter
July Clerk)*

*Answer
quid
ref.*

27 October 1979

YZCZCFDG CON

SPE

MM

270650Z OCT

FROM COMMCEN HSP

TO MODUK

INFO CBF HONG KONG

ADVANCE COPY

IMMEDIATE

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CONFIDENTIAL UK COMMS ONLY

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(FILES)

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PS

PS/KPS

PS/A. Blaker

PS/PUS

A. Co-tarr.

A. Purnoy

A. P. H. M. Study

Lord N. Grenville-Lennox

RC

No 10 Downing St.

DIO Cabinet Office

CONFIDENTIAL

FM SEOUL 270650Z OCT 79

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 259 OF 27 OCTOBER

INFO IMMEDIATE MODUK (FOR DI 4)

IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

PRIORITY TOKYO

PRIORITY PEKING

PRIORITY MOSCOW

PRIORITY CBF HONG KONG

PRIORITY HONG KONG (GOVERNOR)

MY TEL NO 255: DEATH OF PRESIDENT PARK.

1. COUNSELLOR CALLED ON POLITICAL COUNSELLOR AT AMERICAN EMBASSY THIS MORNING. CLARK SAID THAT THEY HAD LITTLE TO ADD TO THE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH EXCEPT THAT THERE WERE NOW SIX DEAD INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT, THE HEAD OF HIS BODYGUARD AND AT LEAST THREE MORE OF THE BODYGUARD. THE KEY SURVIVING EYE WITNESS OF THE INCIDENT IS KIM KAE WON, THE SECRETARY-GENERAL TO THE PRESIDENT, WHO TOOK THE PRESIDENT'S BODY TO A NEARBY MILITARY HOSPITAL WHERE IT WAS FOUND THAT HE HAD DIED A FEW MINUTES EARLIER. THE AMERICANS HAVE NO REASON TO ENTERTAIN ANY SUGGESTION THAT THERE WAS POLITICAL MOTIVATION BEHIND THE INCIDENT. IT AROSE FROM A VIOLENT PERSONAL CLASH BETWEEN THE HEAD OF THE KCIA AND THE HEAD OF THE BODYGUARD, PROBABLY ABOUT THE HANDLING OF THE RECENT POLITICAL SITUATION, AND WAS AGGRAVATED BY THE AMBITION AND AGGRESSIVENESS OF CHA JI CHUL. THE PRESIDENT HAD TRIED TO SEPARATE THE TWO AND WAS SHOT ACCIDENTALLY. CLARK ADDED THAT IT WAS QUITE WRONG FOR THE OVERSEAS PRESS TO TALK IN TERMS OF A COUP.

OVERSEAS PRESS TO TALK IN TERMS OF A COUP.

2. THERE HAS BEEN NOTHING WHATEVER TO INDICATE ANY UNUSUAL ACTIVITY IN THE NORTH SINCE THE EVENT AND NORTH KOREAN REPORTING APPEARS TO BE FACTUAL. GENERAL WICKHAM, COMMANDER IN CHIEF COMBINED FORCES COMMAND, IS AWAY FROM THE COUNTRY BUT WILL RETURN LATER TODAY. GENERAL CHUNG, THE KOREAN ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF, WHO HAS BEEN APPOINTED ADMINISTRATOR OF MARTIAL LAW, WILL REPORT TO THE CIVILIAN CABINET THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENCE. CLARK SAID THAT THE NEW COMBINED OPERATIONS COMMAND HAD WORKED EFFECTIVELY ON THIS OCCASION WITH IMMEDIATE COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND KOREAN MILITARY.
3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EXEMPTING THE ISLAND PROVINCE OF CHEJU FROM MARTIAL LAW IS THAT THIS ENABLES THE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT TO REMAIN IN ULTIMATE CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY AS A WHOLE. CLARK SAID THAT THE AMERICANS HAVE BEEN GREATLY ENCOURAGED BY THE APPARENT DETERMINATION OF THE MILITARY TO SHOW THAT THEY WILL NOT INTERFERE IN THE GOVERNMENT. THEY ARE BEING QUITE OPEN WITH THE AMERICANS ABOUT THEIR INTENTION TO SUPPORT THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINTS CHIEFS OF STAFF HAS SPOKEN TO THIS EFFECT ON TV AND RADIO.
4. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY HAVE NO SPECIFIC THOUGHTS YET ABOUT THE SUCCESSOR TO PRESIDENT PARK. CLARK SAID THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE, THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE FOR UNIFICATION, WITH A MEMBERSHIP OF 2,500, FEW OF WHOM HAVE ANY SPECIFIC POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS, WOULD BE ABLE TO CHOOSE A SUCCESSOR. UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION THIS PROCESS HAS TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN 90 DAYS. CLARK SAID THAT THE AMERICANS ARE HOPING THAT THE OPPORTUNITY MAY BE TAKEN TO SOFTEN SOME ASPECTS OF THE YUSHIN CONSTITUTION (SEE PARA 4 OF MY TEL 255).
5. PRESIDENT CARTER HAS ALREADY SENT A MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE WHICH WAS CONVEYED TO THE ACTING PRESIDENT BY THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR EARLY THIS MORNING. THIS LENDS POINT TO MY RECOMMENDATION THAT WE SHOULD ALSO SEND A MESSAGE QUICKLY (MY TEL NO 257). I HAVE ALREADY SENT A PERSONAL LETTER TO THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. CLARK SAID THAT NO DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN ABOUT THE LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION AT THE FUNERAL BUT THE VICE-PRESIDENT WOULD PROBABLY ATTEND.
6. THE AMERICANS ARE NOT GIVING ANY SPECIAL ADVICE TO THEIR CIVILIAN COMMUNITY THOUGH THEY WOULD EXPECT THEIR PEOPLE TO TUNE IN TO THE AMERICAN FORCES BROADCASTING SYSTEM AND TO BE GUIDED BY ANNOUNCEMENTS ADDRESSED TO THE MILITARY AND DEFENCE DEPART-

LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION AT THE FUNERAL BUT THE VICE-PRESIDENT WOULD PROBABLY ATTEND.

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BATES

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UNCLASSIFIED

FM SEOUL 270332Z OCT 79

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 258 OF 27 OCTOBER

INFO PRIORITY WASHINGTON

PRIORITY TOKYO

PRIORITY HONG KONG (GOVERNOR)

MY TEL NOS 254 AND 255: DEATH OF PRESIDENT PARK

1. THE DEPUTY PREMIER AND MINISTER OF ECONOMIC PLANNING, SHIN HYUN HWACK, ISSUED A STATEMENT THIS MORNING ON ECONOMIC POLICY. HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. THERE WILL BE NO CHANGE IN THE GOVERNMENT'S BASIC ECONOMIC POLICIES:

B. THE FREE MARKET ECONOMY WILL BE GUARANTEED: NO DISRUPTION OF PRODUCTION OR DISTRIBUTION WILL BE TOLERATED:

C. ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER COUNTRIES WILL CONTINUE UNCHANGED: FOREIGNERS' PROPERTY, RIGHTS AND INTEREST IN THE COUNTRY WILL BE GUARANTEED:

D. MAXIMUM EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON STABILITY IN LIVING CONDITIONS AND MAXIMUM EFFORTS WILL BE MADE TO ENSURE PRICE STABILITY:

E. ALL ACTIVITIES OF ENTERPRISES WILL CONTINUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S FINANCIAL AND FISCAL SUPPORT: GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS WILL CONTINUE TO BE CARRIED OUT.

2. FCO PLEASE GIVE WIDE ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION IN WHITEHALL
BATES

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EGSD
NAD
HRGD
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NEWS D
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AS
PS/KAS
PS/MR BLAKER
PS/AUS
SIR J GRANAM
MR CORTAZZI
MR MURRAY
MR BULLARD
LORD ALLENNOX
CABINET OFFICE

COPIES SENT TO
No. 10 DOWNING STREET

IMMEDIATE

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ADVANCE COPY

~~Ps.~~
Ps/Mr Blaker
Ps/Pus
Mr Galleggi
Mr. Murray
FWD
PCD
News D
RC
Ps/No 10. D.S.

DMFG 309/27

DX 558/27

LOY 498/27

OO FCO

GR 150

CONFIDENTIAL

FM SEOUL 270300Z OCT 79

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 257 OF 27 OCTOBER

DEATH OF PRESIDENT PARK.

1. I RECOMMEND THAT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AN OFFICIAL MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE SHOULD BE DESPATCHED FROM HMG, IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE THAT THE MESSAGE SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO HIS EXCELLENCY MR CHOI KYU HAH, ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA, AND THAT IT SHOULD BE SIGNED BY THE PRIME MINISTER.

2. IN SPITE OF THE TRAGIC AND STILL UNCERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH, IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THERE WAS NO POLITICAL MOTIVATION.

3. A MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED BY THE KOREAN AUTHORITIES AND PEOPLE. THERE IS ALSO THE PRACTICAL CONSIDERATION THAT MANY OTHER GOVERNMENTS WILL CERTAINLY BE SENDING HIGH LEVEL MESSAGES AND WE CANNOT AFFORD TO APPEAR LESS CONCERNED.

4. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE FUNERAL WILL TAKE PLACE NEXT SATURDAY 3 NOVEMBER. WITHIN THE NEXT FEW DAYS WE SHALL HAVE TO GIVE THOUGHT TO THE QUESTION OF REPRESENTATION. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO OFFER ANY SPECIFIC ADVICE UNTIL WE KNOW MORE ABOUT THE ARRANGEMENTS, BUT MEANWHILE YOU MAY WISH TO MAKE SOME CONTINGENCY PLANS.

3. A MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED BY THE KOREAN AUTHORITIES AND PEOPLE. THERE IS ALSO THE PRACTICAL CONSIDERATION THAT MANY OTHER GOVERNMENTS WILL CERTAINLY BE SENDING HIGH LEVEL MESSAGES AND WE CANNOT AFFORD TO APPEAR LESS CONCERNED.

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BATES

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CONFIDENTIAL

ADVANCE COPY

(FILES)

XII

FM SEOUL 270130Z OCT
 TO FLASH FCO
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 255 OF 27 OCTOBER
 INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
 IMMEDIATE TOKYO
 IMMEDIATE PEKING
 IMMEDIATE MOSCOW
 IMMEDIATE CBF HONG KONG
 IMMEDIATE HONG KONG () 19-34, 94
 IMMEDIATE MODUK (FOR DI 4)

Ps

Ps LPS

Ps MR BLANKER

Ps PUS

MR CORTAZZI

MR MURRAY

Hd of Fed

~~Ps~~ No 10 Downing St

R. e

MY TEL 254: DEATH OF PRESIDENT PARK

1. PRECISE DETAILS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE PRESIDENT'S DEATH ARE STILL NOT CLEAR. BUT IT APPEARS THAT HE HAD BEEN INVITED TO A PARTY AT THE SENIOR KCIA MESS. THERE WAS NOTHING PARTICULARLY UNUSUAL ABOUT THIS: THEREFORE THERE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY REASON TO SUSPECT THAT HE HAD BEEN LURED THERE. A QUARREL SEEMS TO HAVE BROKEN OUT BETWEEN CHA JI CHUL, THE CHIEF OF THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL BODYGUARD AND KIM CPBE KYU WHO MAY WELL HAVE BEEN RIVALS. KIM DREW A GUN (HE WOULD ALWAYS HAVE BEEN ARMED) AND FIRED AT CHA. THE PRESIDENT MAY HAVE BEEN KILLED ACCIDENTALLY IN THE SHOOTING THAT FOLLOWED. BUT IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT THERE WERE FIVE DEATHS IN ALL SO THERE MUST HAVE BEEN QUITE EXTENSIVE SHOOTING.

2. THE PRESIDENT IS TO BE GIVEN A STATE FUNERAL BUT NO DATE OR ARRANGMENTS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED.

3. THE NEXT FEW DAYS WILL BE CRITICAL. IT IS LIKELY THAT THE MILITARY WILL HAVE SITUATION UNDER TIGHT CONTROL, BUT THESE ARE EXACTLY THE CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH WE HAD ALWAYS EXPECTED THE DANGER OF INVASION TO BE AT ITS HIGHEST.

4. IT IS USELESS AT THE MOMENT TO SPECULATE ON HOW LONG THE INTEL M CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS WILL CONTINUE AND WHO MAY BE THE NEXT PRESIDENT. IT IS JUST POSSIBLE THAT GOOD MAY COME OF THIS TRAGEDY IN THAT IT COULD PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SOME LOOSENING UP OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION. MEANWHILE WE WOULD EXPECT THE PARTIES TO CLOSE RANKS IN FACE OF THE EXTERNAL THREAT.

5. IT SEEMS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT THE VISIT OF OUR IPU DELEGATION WHICH IS DUE TO ARRIVE ON 3 NOVEMBER WILL HAVE TO BE CANCELLED. BUT BEFORE A DECISION IS TAKEN WE WOULD LIKE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT THEIR HOSTS HERE.

6. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE AT THE MOMENT TO GIVE CLEAR ADVICE ON WHAT GUIDANCE SHOULD BE OFFERED TO BUSINESSMEN AND OTHER PROSPECTIVE VISITORS. BUT WE WILL HAVE THIS POINT IN MIND AS WE CONTINUE TO REPORT.

7. WE HAVE JUST LEARNED THAT INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS INTO AND OUT OF SEOUL HAVE BEEN RESUMED AFTER A SHORT BREAK THIS MORNING. INTERNAL FLIGHTS ARE NOT OPERATING.

8. POSTSCRIPT. THE PRIME MINISTER AS ACTING PRESIDENT HAS JUST MADE A BRIEF BROADCAST CONFIRMING THAT HE HAS ASSUMED THAT OFFICE. HE SAID THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD PROMISED TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT KOREA. NO EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS HAD CHANGED. THE ARMY AND POLICE WILL MAINTAIN SECURITY AND WILL BE ON ALERT TO PREVENT ANY INCURSION FROM THE NORTH.

BATES

FCO PSE PAS COPY OF MY TEL NO 254 TO MODUK DI 4

NNNN

FR
Secret

TO FLASH FCO
TEL NO 254 OF 27 OCTOBER

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
IMMEDIATE TOKYO
IMMEDIATE HONG KONG (GOVERNOR GM)
IMMEDIATE MOSCOW
IMMEDIATE PEKING
IMMEDIATE CBF HONG KONG

ADVANCE COPY (XII)
(FILES)

Ps
PS/LPS
PS/MR BLAKER
PS/PUS
MR CORTAZZI
MR MURRAY
Hd of FED
~~Ps~~ No 10 DOWNING ST
R.C

D
EATH OF PRESIDENT PARK

1. THE LATEST REPORTS BEING CARRIED BY THE BBC OVERSEAS SERVICE OF THE DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT APPEAR TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY CORRECT.

PRESIDENT PARK WAS KILLED JUST BEFORE 8 PM LAST NIGHT. AFTER AN EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE CABINET IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH PROVISIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION PRIME MINISTER CHOI KYUAYAH HAD BEEN DECLARED ACTING PRESIDENT.

2. SOME DETAILS OF LAST NIGHT'S EVENTS WERE GIVEN IN A BROADCAST BY THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND INFORMATION THIS MORNING. HE SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD BEEN SHOT BY THE DIRECTOR OF THE KCIA KIM CHOE KYU AFTER A QUARREL. 4 OTHER PEOPLE WERE ALSO KILLED INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT'S CHIEF OF BODYGUARD. KIM WAS ARRESTED BY THE ARMY AND IS UNDER INVESTIGATION.

3. THE GOVERNMENT HAVE DECLARED MARTIAL LAW THROUGHOUT THE REPUBLIC, EXCEPT IN CHEJU ISLAND PROVINCE. THE CURFEW HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO RUN FROM 10PM TO 4AM.

4. THE CHIEF DANGER NOW IS THAT NORTH KOREA MAY BE TEMPTED TO ATTACK IN THE HOPE OF CAPITALISING ON THE UNCERTAINTY OVER THE PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION. THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS WARNED IN NEWS BROADCASTS AGAINST INTERVENTION.

5. TANKS ARE IN POSITION OUTSIDE THE MAIN GOVERNMENT OFFICES AND OTHER VULNERABLE POINTS ARE UNDER MILITARY GUARD. BUT SO FAR AS WE CAN JUDGE AT THE MOMENT THE CITY IS QUIET.

6. FURTHER REPORTS AND COMMENT WILL FOLLOW